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CASE STUDY OF TANZANIA

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The idea of popular participation in economic recovery and development is not new in Tanzania. In fact it is as old as the self help tradition which has become legendary among Tanzanians.

Long before the coming of the Arab and European slavers and colonizers, Tanzanians were well acquainted with the importance of popular participation in solving such natural or unnatural catastrophes like famine, floods, crop destruction by locusts, armyworms or fire, attack by warring tribes, etc. Whenever the country or part of the country was befallen by such calamities, the masses were alerted by means of the traditional instruments of communication - the talking drum and the talking horn. Popular participation by the masses then ensued through which the calamity was put off in the shortest time possible.

Regarding the current economic and development problems in Tanzania, one is apt to ask: "Why has it taken so long - over 15 years - very much unlike the custom of Tanzanians, to put off the calamity? Why was popular participation not applied earlier?" To answer these questions, it is first necessary to review the circumstances under which Tanzania came to find itself in the current economic chaos which has persisted since 1974.

1. Self-help spirit fades away

At the time of independence in 1961, Tanzanians responded with much enthusiasm to their leader, Mwalimu Nyerere's call that their political independence would be meaningless if it was not followed immediately by economic independence, with the awareness that their country's economy had been plundered by the departing colonialists and imperialists. Tanzanians participated fully in self help schemes which went a long way towards the recovery of their country's devastated economy and set a base for future development. Eager to effect development of their newly acquired nation, Tanzanians were able through these self-help schemes to construct village roads, build, repair and equip village schools, they built village dispensaries and health centres, they constructed dams and dug irrigation furrows, etc.

Through popular participation in these self-help schemes, the government was able to save millions of shillings, money which was utilized for meeting the cost of greater development projects. This post independence self-help spirit lasted only for a decade and then started fading away.

2. The spirit of the Arusha Declaration

The introduction of the Arusha Declaration, Tanzania's Blueprint for Socialism and Self reliance, brought much hope to Tanzanians that at least some of their country's plundered economy was going to be recovered. Coming only six years after independence, the 1967 Arusha Declaration was much cause for jubilation. People of all ages walked hundreds of miles from all corners of the country to the capital in Dar es-Salaam and to Arusha in support of the declaration. Some walkers died on the way and have since been declared "martyrs" to the cause of the Declaration.

The ensuing nationalization of banks, insurance companies, import-export and other commercial and trading companies, sisal estates and other privately owned enterprises, which formed the nucleus of the State Trading Corporation (STC) and other public corporations, was another cause for jubilation by Tanzanian masses.

Although some later events resulting from erratic implementation of the Declaration have prompted some well-wishing critics to dub it as being "rather utopian", the architect of the now world famous document Mwalimu Nyerere, former President of Tanzania and current chairman of the ruling and only political party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), has sworn that: "I won't alter or delete even a comma if I was to re-write the document again to-day". This proves how important the document is to Tanzanians, yet mistakes made here and there since its introduction in 1967, have made some Tanzanians wonder whether it will ever take them to the "promised land". Socialism and Self reliance. And if it ever does, how long is it going to take? It took the Israelites 40 years to reach their promised land. It is now only 22 years since the launching of the Arusha Declaration. So, there is still hope!

3. Wrong interpretation of self reliance

Up till the dissolution of the East African Community (EAC) in 1977, Nairobi used to be regarded as the main administrative, industrial and commercial centre for all of the three member countries - Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. At the time when Tanzania opted to do socialist, Kenya was pursuing a brand of capitalism known as African socialism, while Uganda under Obote was pursuing yet another brand of socialism known as "The Common Man's Charter" which were later proved to be tributes of the highest degree.

For most of its essential commodities and consumer goods, Tanzania had, before the Arusha Declaration, depended almost completely on Kenya. But one factor remained true that nearly all the industries and commercial companies which met Tanzania's requirements in Kenya were not of Kenyan origin. They were either owned by foreign capitalists or were branches or extensions of some multinational conglomerates with headquarters based in the metropolitan centers of America and Europe. So, "socialist" Tanzania opted to do without most of the essential consumer goods and commodities rather than obtaining them from "the capitalists" in Kenya. Essential goods like toilet soaps, washing soaps, tooth-pastes and brushes, cooking oils and cooking fats, etc., gradually started disappearing from shop shelves. When available, these commodities were sold at extremely forbidding prices. Building materials - cement, G.I. sheets, etc. became very scarce and extremely expensive whenever available.

Few industries which had been hurriedly set up in a bid to become self-reliant under the direction of the National Development Corporation (NDC), could hardly produce over 30 per cent of their installed capacity due to lack of experienced personnel and essential inputs. So, the scarcity and non-availability of essential goods and commodities continued to persist until it became completely unbearable.

4. China comes to the rescue

In order to meet local costs for the construction of the Tanzania Zambia Railway (TAZARA), the Chinese had flooded the Tanzanian market with nearly all kinds of consumer requirements during the six year period of construction work from 1972 to 1977. This step helped to alleviate shortages by filling the gap left after suspending orders from Kenya. But, completion of the TAZARA construction work meant the end of the swift supply of consumer goods and commodities and the beginning of tougher shortages and scarcities. Local industries were still very far from being able to satisfy the demand.

5. Break up of East African Community (EAC) - closure of border with Kenya

Tanzania's economic situation was aggravated when the country decided to "keep the capitalists at bay" by closing the common border with Kenya, which extends from the centre of lake Victoria straight down to embrace Mount Kilimanjaro and then further down straight to the Indian Ocean. Several tribes live on both sides of the common border i.e. the Ipoz, the Maasai, the Kamba, the Kikuyu, the Taita and the Wachagga (Chagga). To them closure of the common border was like building a giant Berlin wall which separated families residing in either State (to be) [illegible]

The result was almost disastrous. It meant complete stoppage of the few consumer items which used to filter into the country from Kenya until then to alleviate some of the acute shortages which had become a part of Tanzanian life. While consumer goods from Kenya were branded as being of a capitalist origin, those from the southern neighbour - Zambia were branded as being of a Boer origin. Under such circumstances, Tanzania came to find itself in a form of an economic island with little or no inlet at all.

As the country's economy continued to dwindle, so did "the Island" continue to find itself with fewer and few economic inlets and outlets.

6. War to expel tyrant Iddi Amin Dadah

Being economically pressed as Tanzania already was, in 1978 the country was faced with yet another great challenge - that of having to declare war on the tyrant Iddi Amin Dadah of Uganda who had laid claim on part of Tanzania's soil. Tanzania entered into war at a time when most of its foreign exchange reserves were being spent for importing food and when earning from exports was at the lowest ebb. When the war came to an end about a year later, Tanzania was on the brink of complete bankruptcy and the development machinery had ground almost completely to a standstill. That there were no reports of deaths due to famine at this period is mainly due to the people's strong will to survive through popular participation in the recovery of the devastated economy.

7. Wrong and erratic implementation of the villagization programme

Among the good theories contained in the Arusha Declaration document is the idea that people will be able to benefit more from the social services provided by the government - schools, health centres, clean and safe water, etc. if they lived and worked together in communal villages which were to be known as "Ujamaa Villages". At the beginning, experimental villages were started by first providing the selected areas with the necessary amenities before moving the people in. As implementation of the programme gathered momentum during 1973/74, people were moved en masse to unplanned and unsurveyed areas, leaving behind food and cash crops with no one to attend to them. Sometimes, people were moved from lush and fertile valleys where they enjoyed readily available water for both human consumption and irrigation, and where some social amenities had already been established. The criteria employed was to move people to Ujamaa villages situated near major roads irrespective of whether these areas were suitable for agricultural purposes or not.

In some areas, people were moved to Ujamaa villages situated far away from their traditional villages. This meant that they could not go back to

harvest their crops or tend their cash crop farms. All these which included fruits of various kinds, cashewnuts, coconuts, cassava, etc. were left to rot or be taken care of by monkeys and wild beasts.

The main cash crop which suffered most due to this erratic implementation of the villagization programme was cashewnuts. Whereas a total of 235,000 tons of cashewnuts were produced in 1970, production of this vital cash crop dropped sharply to only 16,000 tons in 1987. This decline in production forced cashewnut processing plants which had been set up in all main producing regions to close down causing unemployment to hundreds of workers.

8. Food crop production slashed

Another sector which suffered most due to the erratic implementation of the villagization programme is that of food crop production. Having vacated their traditional farmsteads and left behind all kinds of cash crops untended, it took the evacuees a long time to settle down in their new environments and resume food production again. The next 10 years up to around 1981 were spent for mostly self acclimatization, while the government was faced with the obligation of importing food worth millions of shillings annually for feeding them. On the average, the government imported food worth SHS 90 million annually to feed people in Ujamaa Villages and those in urban areas whose population was growing at an alarming rate of 11 per cent annually. As food production gathered momentum gradually in the newly formed Ujamaa villages, the rate of food imports kept decreasing momentarily.

9. Nationalized sisal estates wither away

Till the time of Arusha Declaration in 1967, sisal had been rated as number one foreign exchange earner followed by coffee, cotton and cashewnuts in that order. Tobacco, tea and pyrethrum completed the list of exports crops which together had enabled Tanzania to have a sizeable foreign exchange reserve. Sisal alone had brought in a sum of SHS 65.6 million in 1964, which was about 35 per cent of all export earnings.

A steep decline in production followed immediately after the nationalization of the sisal estates. While in 1961, the estates which covered 1.5 million hectares produced 230,000 tons of sisal, production dropped to only 33,900 tons in 1987 produced from 0.25 hectares. Several factors have contributed to this sharp decline in production, but major among them are, (a) mismanagement; (b) buyers opting to go synthetic in support of their kith and kin whose sisal estates were nationalized; (c) buyers offering minimal prices as a sign of their detest over the nationalization; (d) lack of proper research on sisal production after the departure of expatriate researchers (before nationalization, research had been carried on an East African basis); (e) workers deserting sisal production work for easier and better paid jobs.

Of the one-and-a half million hectares which had been under sisal in 1964, less than a quarter of this acreage remained productive in 1987. The rest had been reclaimed by forest and wildlife habitation.

10. Drought in the seventies

In order to shift blame from erroneous government and party policies as being mainly responsible for the causes which have resulted in the persisting

economic chaos, most politicians and government leaders have been pointing an accusing finger at drought as the main culprit. But, geographical facts will prove that Tanzania being in the same climatic zone with our northern neighbour, it has no more right to claim presence of drought in 1970s than Kenya could. In fact, given almost the same climatic conditions as they have, there is no reason why these two neighbouring countries should not enjoy the same economic stability. Yet, the value of the T. Shilling which used to be at par with the K. Shilling before the break-up of the East African Community, has so diminished as to have to buy K. Shs. 100/- with T.Shs. 1,200/-. So, the question of drought is out.

II. Unplanned population growth

While the rate of economic growth has been diminishing steeply at an alarming rate of up to 10 per cent annually, that of population growth has been rising also alarmingly at 3.3 per cent annually. More alarming is the migration rate of people from rural to urban areas which is at a speed of 11.0 per cent annually.

The aim of the Arusha Declaration in forming Ujamaa villages was to attract the masses to reverse the negative trend of people's migration to urban areas by making them prefer life in the rural areas where they would be communally sustained by agriculture. But, the opposite has become the reality. Why?

Limited liberty in the newly established Ujamaa villages is considered by popular opinion as being the main cause of the flight of people from rural to urban areas. The village government system which has taken over from the traditional chieftainship and village headmanship has not been very popularly accepted. The reason being that the village government leadership has been more of "a pusher" than as a director. Man being a liberal animal, has decided to migrate to the urban areas where, in spite of suffering without proper employment, he enjoys at least some degree of liberty without having to be pushed around by village government administrators who have little consideration of his liberty.

An economic problem arises of having to feed the over-growing and unproductive urban population - a population which just consumes without producing.

12. Change of consumption pattern

While the population growth was rising alarmingly from only 9 million people at the time of independence in 1961 to nearly 24 million people according to the 1988 population census, consumption patterns have also changed considerably from home produced traditional foods to non-traditional foods. The traditional staple foods of most Tanzanians are maize and maize products with beans. But, during the past two decades or so, most people have almost completely changed their eating habits from traditional staples to non traditional foods - rice, bread and other wheat products, etc. Worse still, the non-producing urban population whose number is increasing at an alarming rate of 11.0 per cent annually, are the ones who have opted to go non-traditional in food consumption almost completely.

In order to cope with this rather unusual situation, the government has been obliged to import the non-traditional foods in large quantities, at an average cost of T.Shs. 4,054 million annually.

13. Nationalized wheat farms wither away

Before the Arusha Declaration, privately owned fully mechanized wheat farms used to suffice the demand for non-traditional foods, especially bread and other wheat products, which most people had become used to consuming. Local small-scale farmers had also joined forces in the production of the non traditional food crops with full assistance from the mechanized farmers.

On nationalization, most of the wheat farms withered away due to mismanagement, while the local small-scale farmers were unable to continue without the assistance of the mechanized farmers. Since then, Tanzanians started experiencing acute shortage of bread and other wheat products until an ordinary loaf of bread became a luxury to the common man. This trend has been punctuated from time to time through wheat importation by the government at a rate of up to tons 100,000 annually.

14. Uneconomic industrialization programme

The industrialization programme which was launched soon after independence in 1961, was based more on political rather than economic grounds. It was then argued that Tanzanian agricultural products were bought cheaply by the industrialized countries which in turn sold back the finished products at exorbitant prices. Results of practical operations during the past three decades have proved quite the opposite.

Contrary to early beliefs, three realities have come to light. In order to protect their industries, the industrialized countries have teamed up to ensure that Tanzania's industrialization programme does not succeed by:

(a) Selling industrial machinery, equipment and spare parts at forbidding prices, and also ensuring that essential inputs were so priced as to become difficult to obtain;

(b) Buying agricultural and natural resource products which form the country's economic base at discouraging prices; and

(c) Given their strong industrial base, the industrialized countries are able to sell their finished goods more cheaply than locally produced goods, even after duty and taxation, therefore, destabilizing local industries.

One good example is that of Tanzania's textile industry. More than 10 textile mills have been established in the country since independence, which use locally produced raw material - cotton. But the products from these mills are not readily available to the local consumer for several reasons. The main two reasons are:

(a) Either the quality of the finished products is very poor and prices too high beyond the reach of local consumers. (The best quality is usually exported); and

(b) Mills producing much below capacity (5 to 30 per cent of installed capacity) and failing to suffice the demand.

thanks to the importers of secondhand garments, locally known as "Mitumba", without which, most Tanzanians would be walking naked by now.

15. Some nationalized industries and companies without soul

Among the nationalized industries and companies, were the British American Tobacco (BAT) which became the Tanzania Cigarette Co. (TCC), and the Bata Shoe Company which became Bora Shoe Company. Both companies had their origin in Kenya, but most of the raw materials which fed the companies were of Tanzanian origin.

Tanzania claims to have a greater number of livestock than that of its human population which stands at 24 million. It also claims to have a greater wildlife population than that of any other country in the world. This means that a shoe company based in Tanzania should not have any problem in obtaining the main raw material - leather for its shoe production in sufficient quantities. Yet, up to the time of trade liberalization some five years ago, ordinary Tanzanians had been used to walking in rough sandals made from used vehicle tyres. Shoe shops all over the country are now full of fancy plastic shoes imported from Taiwan, Hong-Kong, Thailand, South Korea, etc. to fill the gap left by Bora Shoe's ineffectiveness, which sells at extremely prohibitive prices.

Before nationalization, the Bata Shoe Company used to be famous for its production of durable and cheap footwear for people in all walks of life. It also specialized in the production of durable footwear for school children which sold at prices that could be afforded by almost every parent. Now, things are not the same anymore. In recent years, production capacity of the Bora Shoe Company (15 to 9 per cent) has left much to be desired. It is only through government support and soft Bank loans that the company barely remains afloat.

Tobacco production in Tanzania rose from 2.2 thousand tons in 1962/63 to 16.5 thousand tons in 1986/87. This increase in tobacco production would have meant self-sufficiency in the availability of raw materials for the cigarette company. Yet, cigarette production was sometimes as low as only 15 per cent of capacity, making the price of cigarettes shoot as high as T. Shs. 1o/- per single stick.

At the time of nationalization, both the cigarette and shoe companies were well-equipped modern industries complete with well-trained personnel. But, lack of proper management has sent both companies crawling down on their knees, and having to lay off most of their employees albeit temporarily awaiting recovery.

These two companies represent a number of others which have already closed down or are about to do so due to mismanagement and other economic ailments. Others are: Beer Processing and Canning Factory, Bicycle Company Cashewnut Processing Companies, Road Haulage and Transport Companies, Concrete Articles Company (TACONA) and various others. A call has been made recently by the Director-General of the Board of Internal Trade (BIT) to close down some trading companies which have been running uneconomically and are becoming a burden to the government rather than an asset.

16. Arising tourist and hotel projects

It is a well known fact that Tanzania's vast tourist and hotel industry potential is well beyond comprehension. The country is deficient in foreign exchange reserves without having to depend on the other sources. A close look on the map of Tanzania reveals a number of important tourist and hotel industry potentials which include the following:

(a) Lake Crystal Reserve extending for over 500 miles from the Mozambique border with Mozambique to the border with Kenya in the north;

(b) Three of the largest lakes in the world - Victoria in the north, Tanganyika in the west and Nyasa in the south west - which are all navigable and a paradise to fishing enthusiasts;

(c) The Serengeti National Park and other smaller parks and game reserves with the world famous Ngorongoro Crater, house nearly three-quarters of all the animals in the world as if they were direct from the Noah's Ark;

(d) Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa and her close neighbour mount Meru, the view of which can be enjoyed direct from this Conference hall;

(e) Dr. David Livingstone's historical discovery route from Bagamoyo to the Indian Ocean and Ujiji to Kigoma near the eastern coast of Lake Tanganyika.

These and many other tourist and hotel industry potentials have over the years, like with agriculture, been neglected on the surface with a cant hope.

Tanzania has, since independence but especially since the introduction of the Arusha Declaration, regarded tourism as a way of spreading African culture and world unity. Hence the Government's attitude in exploiting fully the abundant natural tourist attractions.

On coming to full fledgedness, that is gaining independence through the Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA). This airport was constructed soon after the Arusha declaration at great expense in order to get a fair share of the tourist industry that, previously, was dominated by Kenya. But, due to lack of properly laid down infrastructure, including efficient road transportation to the game attraction areas, the airport has been kept in the wilderness as a monument for years without being economically utilized. Due to these shortcomings, tourists still prefer using Kenya as the gateway to East African tourism where they then decide to come to Tanzania only if there is some money left for doing so.

17. Overtaxing discourages the masses

A year after the Arusha Declaration the government decided to do away with the mass taxation system known as "poll" or "head tax", which was considered too humiliating by its nature, and in its place came an indirect taxation system through which one paid as he earned or as he bought. Taxation was imposed on each and every consumer item and commodity, which sometimes was so high as to cause a sharp decline in living standards due to high cost of living. In light of this, those who were employed received their wage or salary slips with a line indicating Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) and a sum

was deducted for rent in which was up to 15 per cent of one's monthly earning. As years passed by and the state of the country's economy grew worse and worse, the indirect taxation rate grew higher and higher until Tanzanians came to be known as the highest taxed people in the world.

As if this was not enough, the direct taxation system was re-introduced five years ago, not as a substitute for an extra taxation on top of the indirect taxation. This came as a result of some erratic government and party policies, through which, long-established and perfectly effective systems of local government and co-operatives were abolished soon after the Arusha Declaration.

When 15 years later, the government discovered that it had made a grave mistake in abolishing the local governments and the co-operative system, it had no alternative but to reintroduce the system at the high expense of the masses. So back came the direct taxation system, but this time under a more polite name "Development Tax", making life even much harder for ordinary Tanzanians.

These and various other erratic government and party policies, have highly contributed to the causes for the still persisting economic chaos, and for the struggling spirit of popular participation in development issues.

The 1984/85 government budget was dubbed "budget tenewezi" (dependent budget) by members of the National Assembly. It was so described mainly for two reasons. First, its expenditure side was much higher than the earning side, making it necessary for the government to ask the ordinary man more than it had him. The budget was also called "budget tegemezi" also because it had most of its important expenditures to be met from aid and loans contrary to the national aspirations of policies, programmes and priorities. When the members of Parliament demanded to know from the Finance Minister why he had prepared a "Budget Tegemezi" when the national policy was to be self reliant, the minister retorted "Everyone will live on what his or her own borders". And shouldering burdens placed Tanzanians are.

TRENDS TOWARDS RECOVERY OF THE ECONOMY

Recovery through popular participation

Two main factors have triggered popular participation in the economic recovery and development programme. The first factor is a result of the agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under which the Tanzanian currency - the Shilling has been devalued from T.Shs. 15/- to SDR 1 in 1986 down to the current rate of T. Shs. 160/- to the dollar, finding the currency rather useless as a purchasing power after such drastic devaluation, most Tanzanians have found it necessary to become self reliant by going back to the farm where they are sure to make a living direct from the soil. The second factor is the denationalization and identification of agricultural and proper definition of land tenure policy and after being assured of the ownership of the land tenure policy. After being assured of the ownership of the land they are to cultivate, the masses have recovered their self-help and development spirit which was lost during the implementation of the villagization programme in 1973/74. So, they have started climbing from the bottom of the economic and development ladder where they had arrived after 15 years of steady downward fall.

1. Revival of the self help spirit

Aware that the mere devaluation of the shilling could not go far in meeting their development needs, Tanzanians have since four years ago rediscovered their self-help spirit. Hundreds of development projects which had ground to a complete standstill are now being developed again. These include village roads, irrigation dams and furrows, schools, health centres, etc.

Through these self-help schemes the government has been given some breathing break for consolidating its financial base for greater development purposes.

2. Slave-master relationship in cash crop production

Although the annals of the London-based Anti-slavery Society describes slavery as having been abolished some 150 years ago, Tanzanians are quite aware that what was abolished around the middle of the last century were the physical shackles. Otherwise, slavery still exists in various indirect forms:

(a) To have to toil in your land and sell the product of your toiling at the "master's" price, and not at your price, is tantamount to slavery;

(b) To have to change your consumption pattern and eat the "master's" food, sold to you at the "master's" price, is slavery;

(c) To have to abandon food crop cultivation for self-survival, and have to cultivate what the "master" requires, no matter how meagerly you are paid, that is slavery;

(d) To have to allow your population to grow alarmingly high, without planning or control, causing your people to toil harder to satisfy the "master's" requirements at still more meagre prices, that is slavery indeed;

(e) To have to depend on consumer goods which you don't produce, but which the "master" produces and sells to you at his price, after also buying your products at his price, which you produce by toiling on your land, that is pure slavery.

The list could go on and on indefinitely, but what is important to remember is that: the "master" finds it cheaper to engage the "slave" in tilling and toiling on his own land rather than expect the "slave" to the "master's" land and have to incur the cost of maintaining him there. In fact, the new form of slavery is even much more economical since: while the "master" is able to get what he needs from the "slave" at the "master's" price. That which is produced by the "slave" on his own land at his own cost, allows the "master" to utilize his own land at home for other purposes.

Are you shocked?

While it is not the purpose of this paper to bring back ugly memories on slavery 150 years after it was reported as having been abolished, but observing the manner in which the industrialized countries ("the master", are conducting business with Africa "the slave", one can not help concluding that the terms are that of "master-slave relationship". Tanzanians are determined to sever this kind of relationship through popular participation in the recovery of their economy and development of their country.

4. Rehabilitation of export cash crops

Having come to realize that the more you toil on export cash crop production the less you receive year after year, the Tanzanian farmer has lost his enthusiasm in putting more effort on export crop production at the expense of food crop production. But, since he still needs foreign exchange for acquiring some of his basic needs he still has to toil further but now with more caution:

(a) Sisal - having realized and admitted that it was a mistake to nationalize the sisal estates, the government has since the past four years been inviting the private sector to join hands in reviving the vital cash crop. Until now, the private sector has proved to be a better handler of the crop than the public sector though both are striving for the same purpose - that sisal should regain its position as number one foreign exchange earner.

Villagers living in the neighbourhood of the sisal estates have also joined hands in reviving the crop through a means that has proved beneficial to both sides. The villagers weed between rows of young sisal plants and grow food crops like maize, beans, etc. After harvest, the remnants serve also as fertilizer for the young sisal plants.

Through workers participation in the management of the sisal estates, better working condit[illegible] sisal workers has been formulated. This way, the problem of finding sisal workers have been formulated. This way, the problem of finding sisal cutters, which had hitherto been very acute, is being gradually solved. And sisal production is again gathering momentum.

(b) Cashewnuts and coconuts - As again the government has come to realize and admit some of the mistakes made during the implementation of the villagization programme, villagers have been allowed to maintain their crops in both the traditional and Ujamaa villages. Since these two may be located several miles apart, temporary shelters are erected in the traditional villages for use during peak crop seasons. This way, cash and food crops which had been deserted for the past 15 years are being rehabilitated again. Main among these are cashewnuts and coconuts.

The harmful way of weeding by setting fire to weeds between cashewnut and coconut plants as a way of saving time to return to Ujamaa villages miles away, has now ceased. Villagers, with the assistance of government agriculture officers are now applying more scientific ways of weeding and tending to the crops. This way, production of the two cash crops is slowly gathering momentum again. At the same time, cashewnut processing, soap and oil manufacturing plants, which had for years suspended production, are now functioning again, albeit at a snail's pace to start with.

(c) Cloves - while on the mainland, sisal, coffee and cashewnuts, together with cotton are the main export crops, clove production has always remained the only cash crop in the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba and the backbone of the islands' economy. But, in recent years, the price of the crop has so diminished to the extent that it can no longer be relied upon as a sustainer of the islanders' life. Production capacity of the crop has also dropped significantly due to ageing of the clove trees, some of which are over 70 years old.

In order to offset this discouraging situation, the islanders have well received and accepted the advice to stop depending solely on clove and go for other cash crops as well. Cocoa, tea and livestock breeding are some the substitutes in which the islanders have placed popular participation for the recovery and development of the isles economy.

While on the mainland, the staple food is maize the islanders main staple is rice. In the past, encouraged by abundant clove harvests and a lucrative price of the crop, the islanders had mainly depended on imports for their rice supply. Now that the circumstances have changed, and importation of enough rice to satisfy the demand is no longer possible, the islanders are fully participating in rice production and expect to be self-reliant in the production of the crop in three to five years time;

(d) Other cash crops - favourable climatic conditions which have persisted for the past four years have enabled production capacity of three other main export crops - coffee, tea and cotton - to rise considerably. Although market prices of the crops have also fallen sharply, the government has been prompt in monitoring the inflation value of the £. shs. and promptly effected adjustments when paying the farmers.

Like the clove farmers in the isles of Pemba and Zanzibar, some farmers on the mainland are also diversifying production to include other cash and food crops in order to offset the economic hardship.

4. Rehabilitation of food crop production

As the people become more accustomed to living in the Ujamaa villages and the land tenure policy becomes more defined, the spirit of self-reliance in food production is gradually returning. With the awareness of what is for communal purpose and what is for individual use, the people are again back to the fields in both the traditional and Ujamaa villages where food production is now in full swing. Favourable climatic conditions which have persisted for the past four years, has also been an encouraging factor for the popular participation in food production.

Whereas up to three years ago, the government was bound to import up to 317,000 tons of maize annually since 1974, production of the staple food is now so abundant that the problem has turned to be that of storage rather than availability of the staple.

Other food crops of the leguminous type which were in great shortage only three years back are now available in large quantities.

Restriction of crop movement from region to region or from district to district which was imposed during the peak food shortage period, had been cause for serious food shortages in some areas while there was plenty of food in other areas. This kind of artificial shortage is no longer being experienced after the restrictions were waived four years ago.

5. Production of non-traditional food crops

Change of consumption patterns and decline in production of non-traditional food crops - rice, wheat, etc. had caused the government to import same in large quantities since 1971. Migration of people from rural to urban areas at a high rate of 11.0 per cent annually, where most of them lived by

consuming non-traditional foods without producing, was also the cause of high rate of non-traditional food imports.

After the definition of land tenure policy, cultivation of rice and wheat has resumed again in top gear. Fertile valleys and plains which were vacated during the implementation of the villagization programme, are again being fully utilized.

Rice farming by irrigation

With technical assistance from several foreign governments, Japan, North Korea, China and Iran, people are participating fully in rice production projects by irrigation in all areas of the country. Since it is not possible to reverse the food consumption pattern, at least, people are now participating fully int he production of the non-traditional foods they have opted to consume.

Food stores which only three years ago used to be empty, are now full of all types of traditional and non-traditional foods.

What is more interesting is: although the government has set fixed prices for all non-traditional and traditional food crops, producers are selling them at much cheaper prices so as to satisfy demand and avoid the possibility of poorly stored crops rotting before they are sold.

Wheat production

Production of wheat which had slackened after nationalization of privately owned mechanized farms, is returning to normal again after certain important factors have been reviewed:

(a) Again, definition of land tenure policy has attracted many small scale farmers to go back into wheat farming;

(b) Technical assistance from both Tanzania and foreign governments Canada and the Nordic countries, has helped to revive people's enthusiasm to again fully participate in wheat farming.

As a result of popular participation in wheat production, bread and other wheat products are no longer luxuries to most Tanzanians.

5. Participation in controlling population growth

Traditionally, a Tanzanian believes that every child comes to into this world with its own food. But events of recent years have proved this theory to be wrong. The reality is, Tanzanians have come to realize that one's guarantee to exist in this world is his ability to participate in production activities for his own development and that of his country in general.

At the time of independence in 1961, Tanzania's population was only nine million people. This population has grown threefold to 24 million people by the 1988 census. While the country's population has trebled, food production was declining at the rate of around 10 per cent annually since 1974. By this ratio, it means that more than two-thirds of the population are unproductive - over 18 million people who just consume without producing.

Over the years, politicians have been reacting to this problem as "a sensitive issue" not daring to be frank to the people on the dangers of such uncontrolled population growth. The issue has been treated as sensitive because it is almost taboo to tell a Tanzanian that he should plan the number of children in his family. Taboo because children are considered as a blessing from God and so man should not interfere by regulating the number. 'God brings as many children as he pleases, and also takes away as many as he pleases', they argue.

They might have been right during the days before the advent of modern medicine, when God could take away as many children as he brought, but it is no longer so now, when modern health care allows most of the children to survive until old age.

The early post-independence Development Plans - 1963 to 1974

These early plans had among their goals to:

(a) Reduce infant mortality by 8 per cent by 1980;

(b) Increase life expectancy by 60 per cent by 1980;

(c) Complete self-sufficiency in food crop production by 1980.

While nearly all the other targets of the plans, i.e. food sufficiency, industrial production sufficiency, etc. had proved to be a complete failure by 1980, the plans had succeeded in causing a population explosion from nine million people at the beginning of the development plans in 1963 to 20 million people in the targeted year - 1980.

The economic hardships which have persisted for the past 15 years have taught Tanzanians that life is not just increasing the number of people, but also striving to strike a balance between population growth and the growth of food production. With this awareness, people are now fully participating in family planning programmes of their own accord. It is not unusual to hear a young man saying: "I have three children; that's enough for me under the present economic hardships". Such a statement would have been taboo only 10 years ago.

.. The exodus

As the value of the T. shs. keeps diminishing, and the cost of essential commodities, including food, keep soaring, life in the urban areas is no longer as lucrative as it had been expected to be. The migrants from the rural areas have soon come to find themselves in a form of economic captivity where one is no longer sure of where the next morsel would be coming from. Accommodation and transport expenses, including other such expenses related with urban areas, have become so prohibitive as to make the "captives" wish they were back in "the promised land" - the rural area - where they could be self-reliant in food production and earn money from the production of some cash crops.

So, the exodus back to the rural areas has begun. Here again, the definition of land tenure policy has helped. Having been assured of finding enough land to cultivate both food and cash crops, the "urban captives" are now back "the Promised Land" - the rural areas, led by the Party Guidelines -

the Arusha declaration whose architect Mwalimu Nyerere has been nicknamed by the locals as Moses of Tanzania.

8. Border with Kenya opens: trade with PTA member countries

Before his death in a tragic road accident, former Prime Minister, Edward Moringe Sokoine had assured that his fellow Maasais who reside on both sides of the common border between Kenya and Tanzania, with little or no awareness of the border, were united. Sokoine, himself a Maasai knows that by uniting the Maasais he had united all the peoples of Tanzania and Kenya. Since that historical day in 1984, lucrative trade has been flowing between the two countries. In fact, opening of the border with Kenya was tantamount to opening a new chapter leading to trade exchange among different African nations. The action was like a seal to the treaty which established the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) three years earlier in December 1981.

Shortage of essential consumer goods ceased immediately after throwing open the trade doors to the outside world through Kenya and other neighbouring countries. On its part, Tanzania has been finding new markets for its industrial and agricultural products within the PTA member countries.

As the "masters" from the industrialized countries of Europe are preparing to make the African toil even harder for his existence through their consolidation in a European Common Market (ECM), Tanzania's participation in trade-exchange with other PTA member countries is serving as a blow for breaking the economic shackles that still chain Tanzania and the whole of Africa to economic slavery.

9. Effects of trade liberalization

For over 70 years, Tanzania's internal and external trade was conducted by people of foreign origin - Europeans, Asians, Arabs, etc. During these periods, the foreigners consolidated themselves financially both inside and outside the country. When in 1971 the Tanzania government decided to nationalize all buildings worth from T. Shs. 100,000/- and over, the Asian community which owned most of the nationalized buildings was extremely shocked. In retaliation, the community froze all the monies it held outside the country and stopped it from flowing back to Tanzania.

Soon after the Building Acquisition Act, members of the Asian community split themselves into two groups: one group left the country to go and service the money they hoarded outside the country. The second group remained in the country playing a wait-and-see attitude while doing what seemed like normal trade through the Bank of Tanzania.

As the economic recess set in, and the Bank of Tanzania had no more money to offer, the Asian community started tapping some of their overseas reserves albeit indirectly. At first the government protested, claiming that the money being spent by the Asian community was money that should have been in the government coffers. But on second thought, the government realized that even if a ban was imposed on what was considered as illegal imports, there was no way of recovering the money hoarded outside the country by the Asian and other minority communities. A ban would also deprive the country of the goods which such imports would bring in.

It was under such circumstances that trade liberalization was sanctioned in 1984 allowing imports of specific types of goods provided that duty and tax were paid.

About the same time the government waived restrictions on building construction which had been in force since 1971, assuring the public that there would be no further nationalization of buildings.

10. Trade and building boom

Through trade liberalization and the freedom to construct new buildings, internal trade has returned back to normal and new buildings are coming up again after 17 years of stagnation. Scarcity of essential goods that had almost paralyzed the country in late 70s and early 80s, had become a matter for history.

The act of importing without touching the government coffers has given the government breathing time to consolidate its foreign exchange reserves while at the same time collecting duty and tax from the imports which it has not serviced. Money so accumulated by the government is now being utilized for development purposes.

Popular participation in rehabilitation of export cash crops has also given the government a chance to start swelling its coffers after 15 years of economic stagnation.

11. Recovery through food self-sufficiency

Popular participation during the past five years in the production of food crops has enabled the country to attain self-sufficiency in food. With the exception of non-traditional food crops - rice and wheat which the government still imports in small quantities, especially for the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, it is now possible to save most of the US$ 90 million which used to be spent annually on food imports. On other development issues, Tanzanians can now say: "Seek first self sufficiency in food production and all the rest will follow gradually".

12. Participation through small-scale industry

Having realized the inadequacy of trying to industrialize without a properly laid down industrial base, and after the collapse of many of the nationalized industries, including those formed hurriedly through political pressure with little consideration of the economic implications, the masses are now participating fully in forming and running small scale industries which have proved to be the immediate answer to the industrialization problem.

With the assistance of the specially formed Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO), small-scale industries are being established in all regions and districts of the country. They manufactured nearly all types of essential goods which range from electricware to domestic and household appliances. Threefold benefits are derived from this programme:

(a) Easy and quick transfer of technology from the industrialized world;

(b) Useful occupational opportunities for thousands of Tanzanians who otherwise would be going unemployed;

(c) Sure means of satisfying the demand for essential goods.

Given the strong base on which this small-scale industry is laid there is no doubt that within a short span of time, some of them will grow to become large-scale industries. After all, that is how the large-scale industries of the industrialized world were founded about only one century or so ago.

13. Summary

In view of the foregone details, it is clear that most of the economic and development problems which have persisted since 1974 could have been avoided had the government and the party been less erratic in their policies. Or, at least it would have taken lesser time, as is traditional among Tanzanians, to get out of them.

Events of the past five years have proved that with proper guidance and less interference, popular participation would have sufficed in recovering the economy and effecting development progress without having to enter into agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) whose pill is proving to be too bitter.

It is also clear that most of the mistakes which led to the economic chaos could have been avoided had there been a second opinion while formulating party and government policies. While it might have been right in the past, due to political immaturity, to rely on only one opinion from a single political party, recent world events have proved that it is no longer proper to do so.

Changing with time by getting several opinions from more than only one political party will serve to avoid recurrence of similar problems.

The author of this paper is a Member of the International Institute of Communications (IIC), the International Organization of Journalists (IOJ), and General Secretary the Journalists Organization of Tanzania (JOT).

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